

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 726

By Beavers

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of the late Mr. William Dean Thompson and honor Mrs. Nelda Ann McDonald Thompson on the occasion of their induction into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame.

WHEREAS, agriculture has been a cornerstone of Wilson County since the county's founding in 1799, and those citizens involved in farming have always been a vital part of the community; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly specially recognize those outstanding citizens who have dedicated their lives to promoting the importance of agriculture in our society; and

WHEREAS, two such estimable persons are the late William Dean Thompson and Nelda Ann McDonald Thompson; Mr. and Mrs. Thompson were jointly inducted into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame on April 5, 2016, for their legacy in continuing the time-honored tradition of the family farm; and

WHEREAS, William Dean Thompson was born March 2, 1944, in the Bairds Mill community on the farm where Nelda Thompson still lives today; Nelda Ann McDonald Thompson was born July 9, 1945, on Gilmore Hill Road; and

WHEREAS, at an early age, Nelda Thompson helped her mother on the farm by milking cows and tending to the garden; and

WHEREAS, William Dean Thompson's father died in 1961, leaving him at age seventeen and his brother, Terry, age nine, to keep the family farm going; Mr. Thompson raised tobacco, Suffolk sheep, hogs, and beef cows and milked a dairy herd twice each day, before

and after he attended Lebanon High School, from which he graduated in 1963 and began farming full time; and

WHEREAS, after graduation, he worked with the USDA Soil Conservationist for a short time, while building a new dairy barn and milking; and

WHEREAS, in 1966, William Dean and Nelda Thompson were married, and Mrs. Thompson worked at Lebanon Bank for four years until the birth of their first child, Chris, in 1970, when she became a stay-at-home mother to raise her family; and

WHEREAS, their daughter, Melissa, was born in 1972, followed by Courtney in 1974; Nelda Thompson placed a playpen in the barn to watch the children as she milked cows every day; and

WHEREAS, William Dean Thompson and the children all took artificial insemination courses at Select Sires in Franklin and built a top-producing herd based on this training; and

WHEREAS, William Dean Thompson received the 1962 Agricultural Accomplishment Award and was named Outstanding Young Farmer by the Jaycees in 1969, Wilson County Outstanding Conservation Farmer in 1980, and Wilson County Top Alfalfa Hay Producer in 1985; the Thompson family was recognized multiple times by DHIA for having the top dairy herd; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Thompson served as deacon at Adams Grove Church of Christ and was a board member of Select Sires, Wilson Farmers Co-op, and the Wilson County Fair Board and a member of the Holstein Association of America and Wilson County DHIA, serving as president of the latter organization; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Thompson passed away on June 4, 1998; Mrs. Thompson retired from Wilson County Schools in 2014 after fourteen years as a special education assistant, and she still attends Adams Grove Church; and

WHEREAS, today, the entire Thompson family is still involved in agriculture and hopes to continue the family farm tradition, because according to Nelda Thompson, "There is no better life"; and

WHEREAS, the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame honors those dedicated citizens who have committed their lives to developing and maintaining the highest standards and principles in their chosen vocation, and it is fitting that this General Assembly honor the memory of the late William Dean Thompson and honor Nelda McDonald Thompson for their valuable service to agriculture and the farming community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor the memory of the late Mr. William Dean Thompson and honor Mrs. Nelda Ann McDonald Thompson on the occasion of their joint induction into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame, as we reflect fondly upon their many contributions to upholding the agricultural traditions of Wilson County and the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.